

# DEFENSE HEALTH AGENCY

## GUIDANCE FOR ELECTRONIC PRESCRIBING (eRx)

### 1. Overview

Upon installation of a Composite Health Care System (CHCS) enhancement, Military Treatment Facility (MTF) pharmacies will be able to receive and process electronic prescriptions from civilian providers\*. This document details the tasks and processes required to be completed by each MTF pharmacy to ensure a successful implementation of electronic prescribing. *Note: This guidance is only applicable to MTF pharmacies that receive prescriptions from civilian providers.*

*\*Note: “civilian providers” in this document refers to providers that are not working at an MTF*

#### 1.1 Activation Timeline

After the electronic prescribing software is installed on a CHCS host by the CHCS vendor, each MTF connected to that host **MUST** adhere to the following implementation timeline:

- 5 business days after software installation – The MTF pharmacy will contact the Pharmacy Analytics Support Section (PASS) to validate the Pharmacy Location Information (as described in Section 2.3). The PASS phone number is: 866-275-4732 option 1
- 14 business days after software installation – Pharmacy User Training is completed
- 15 business days after software installation – The MTF will activate the applicable CHCS Dispensing Location that will accept electronic prescriptions (as described in the Electronic Prescribing Release Notes and Implementation Guide- Appendix A). and confirm with the PASS that all implementation tasks (i.e. CHCS software installed, training, and CHCS dispensing location activation) are completed prior to publishing the MTF pharmacy location
- 19 business days after software installation – The MTF pharmacy location(s) will be published to the eRx commercial networks. At that time, civilian providers will be able to see that MTF pharmacy location in their eRx system and will have the ability to send electronic prescriptions to that MTF pharmacy. *This will be considered the “Go-Live” date for e-Prescribing.*
  - *Note: While the software will be activated, the dissemination of the MTF Pharmacy location information will vary depending on the eRx network and software the civilian provider is using. Therefore, this date is considered a “soft opening” in the fact that it may not be widely known that the MTF can accept electronic prescriptions, so the initial number of incoming transactions could be low. This will allow each MTF to ease into this new process and gain a comfort level with the changes in workflow.*

- 30 business days after software installation (can begin sooner if MTF is ready) – The MTF will begin to educate and publicize to their beneficiaries and civilian providers about this new capability (Section 3.2).
  - *Note: If an MTF decides to begin communications sooner than 30 business days, be aware that some civilian provider's eRx systems may not have received your MTF pharmacy information yet (will not be able to send an electronic prescription yet). It can take up to 30 days for published pharmacy information to promulgate to non-MTF providers systems.*

## 2. Pre-Go-Live Activities

Describe the activities the MTFs need to accomplish prior to activating electronic prescribing.

### 2.1 Formulary Publication

Beneficiaries do not receive a hard copy Rx when their civilian provider e-prescribes a medication to your facility. Therefore, it is essential to the patient's care that you resolve any issues in coordination with the provider.

Civilian e-Prescribing systems do not communicate MTF specific formulary information to providers. Potential resolutions to non-formulary issues include contacting the provider to: 1) switch the medication to a therapeutically equivalent formulary medication, 2) make a determination whether the beneficiary meets prior authorization or medical necessity criteria to receive the non-formulary medication at your facility, 3) transfer the prescription to another MTF pharmacy and/or Home Delivery.

The best method currently available to minimize receipt of non-formulary electronic prescriptions is to publish your MTF formularies to civilian providers through the Enterprise Formulary Tool on your the MTF website and downloaded to mobile devices (e.g., Smartphone, iPhone®, etc.).

As part of a Department of Defense (DoD) enterprise contract, a formulary tool is available to any MTF at no additional cost to the MTF. To use this formulary search tool, contact the DHA, POD (POC: Henry Gibbs, email: [henry.gibbs@dha.mil](mailto:henry.gibbs@dha.mil)).

*Note: Each MTF is highly urged to publish its formulary prior to implementing e-Prescribing.*

### 2.2 Staff training

MTFs should train staff by using the PowerPoint slides (Appendix B) and User Guide (Appendix C).

## 2.3 Establish Virtual CHCS Electronic Prescribing (eRx) Dispensing Locations

The CHCS dispensing locations that will accept eRxs are being identified by the Site, and supported by the Defense Health Agency (DHA) Pharmacy Analytics Support Section (PASS), formerly known as the Pharmacy Operations Center. Sites may incorporate this new workflow into an existing CHCS pharmacy, or create a new virtual pharmacy in CHCS that would be used only for electronic prescriptions, which will allow unique CHCS prescription numbers for eRxs. (This is similar to setting up a CHCS dispensing location for entering hard copy prescriptions.) Also, a separate eRx dispensing location allows the workload to be segregated and the use of a unique CHCS prescription number easily identifies these prescriptions as being received electronically.

The DHA PASS will utilize the Site provided information to publish the CHCS pharmacy dispensing locations to the civilian providers through the e-Prescribing networks. This information allows the civilian providers to identify the MTFs that are accepting eRxs and electronically route the prescription to the correct pharmacy.

The PASS has already received an initial list of pharmacy dispensing location information from each of the Services. However, it is very important that each MTF contact the PASS no later than 5 business days after the software is installed to validate that the pharmacy information is still accurate (Section 1.1). After initial setup, any changes or inactivation of a CHCS pharmacy dispensing location needs to be coordinated with the DHA PASS 45 days in advance.

The following information needs to be provided to the DHA POD, for each CHCS pharmacy dispensing location:

- Pharmacy Address, Phone number, and Fax number to the outpatient site where eRxs will be received
  - *Note: In the event that an electronic prescription cannot be transmitted to a MTF pharmacy (e.g. network downtime, timeout, etc.) the e-prescribing network will transmit the prescription to a designated MTF pharmacy fax machine. It is important that MTF pharmacies monitor this fax machine for electronic prescriptions. A MTF pharmacy receiving faxed prescriptions might be an indicator that there is a network/connectivity issue and it is recommended that the PASS is notified to assist in troubleshooting any potential issues.*
- Pharmacy National Provider Identifier (NPI) – A new NCPDP and NPI will be provided for each new MTF eRx pharmacy.
  - *Note: The NPI for each CHCS pharmacy dispensing location for e-Prescribing must be unique. That is, it cannot be used by any other CHCS pharmacy dispensing location to include pharmacies in another CHCS Division and Inactive pharmacies. Failure to have this NPI unique will result in the rejection of electronic prescriptions.*

### **2.3.1 Configure CHCS eRx Dispensing Location and Activation of Interface**

The Electronic Prescribing Release Notes and Implementation Guide (Appendix A) provides detailed setup instructions for the CHCS dispensing location and activation of the interface.

## **3. Go-Live Activities**

### **3.1 Publish the MTF Pharmacy Information to the Electronic Prescribing Network**

The MTF Pharmacy will confirm with the PASS that the MTF is ready to publish the pharmacy information to the electronic prescribing network no later than 15 business days after installation of the CHCS electronic prescribing software (Section 1.1)

The designated CHCS pharmacy is now LIVE. It may take up to 30 days for the pharmacy information to be distributed to the electronic prescribing / electronic health record systems (i.e. available for the civilian provider to see in their e-prescribing system for selection).

The MTF pharmacy may want to engage a few local providers to ask for their participation in sending a few test eRx's in order to ascertain when civilian providers are able to "see" the MTF e-prescribing option within their local e-prescribing system and to ensure prescription data is being appropriately transmitted. (See Section 3.2.2)

### **3.2 Communication Activities**

Depending on the MTF Pharmacy's comfort level with electronic prescribing, Patient and Provider Education may begin as early as 19 business days after installation of the CHCS electronic prescribing software (the day the MTF pharmacy location(s) will be published to the eRx commercial networks), but no later than 30 business days after the software installation occurs.

*Note: It may take up to 30 days after the pharmacy is published to the electronic prescribing network before the pharmacy information is viewable in the civilian provider's systems.*

#### **3.2.1 Beneficiary Education**

Communications with beneficiaries should focus on informing them that your MTF can accept electronic prescriptions and educating them on the new process. Announcement of this capability to beneficiaries should occur no later than 30 business days after the CHCS software is installed.

### **3.2.1.1 Pamphlets**

Beneficiary pamphlets can be used as “stuffers” in prescription bags and also placed in pharmacy waiting areas. A patient pamphlet template has been created that can be used by each MTF (Appendix D).

- This pamphlet can be customized with site-specific information, such as, MTF pharmacy name, phone number(s), and formulary website information.

### **3.2.1.2 Automated Telephony Communication**

The Enterprise RxRefill solution provides a method for outbound mass education notifications with the capability to capture beneficiary specific responses via the telephone. Information on the functionality can be found in the Telephony Communication Guide; please contact the PASS if you need this information.

This feature can automate outbound messages to beneficiaries. Each MTF can create a custom message to notify beneficiaries of the new eRx capability. Contact AudioCARE™ customer service at (800) 606-8677 or [support@audiocare.com](mailto:support@audiocare.com) for setup questions, user guides, training, and further assistance.

### **3.2.2 Provider Education**

Send a letter or flyer to local civilian providers to inform them that the MTF can accept eRxS. Sites may also want to identify the local non-MTF provider practices that generate the highest volume of written prescriptions at baseline and meet with the practice leadership in person. A provider pamphlet template has been created that can be used by each MTF (Appendix E).

- This pamphlet can be customized with site-specific information, such as, MTF pharmacy name, phone number(s), and formulary website information

### **3.2.3 Other Communication Methods**

Prominently post a message on the MTF and/or formulary websites and use local media (e.g. Service and civilian newspapers, television channels, etc.) to inform beneficiaries and providers that your MTF can accept electronic prescriptions.